

## Message Text

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ORIGIN MCT-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 /014 R

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EUR/WE:B MCKINLEY

-----024580 062302Z /21

O 062244Z APR 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 089027

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS

SUBJECT:US POLICY ON RESPONDING TO ACTS OF TERRORISM

REF: A) HOLMES-ISHAM TELCON; B) A775, FEB 75

1. POST MAY DRAW ON FOLLOWING RELEVANT SECTIONS OF  
DEPARTMENT'S GUIDELINES FOR RESPONSE TO TERRORIST  
INCIDENTS IN ITS CONSULTATIONS WITH GOI.

2. FROM REF. B, SHOULD THE MATTER OF A MONETARY RANSOM  
ARISE, THE US GOVERNMENT WOULD MAKE KNOWN THAT, AS A  
MATTER OF POLICY, IT DOES NOT PAY SUCH MONEY.

3. THE WISHES AND RIGHTS OF THE HOSTAGE'S FAMILY OR  
EMPLOYER MUST BE BORNE IN MIND BY THE US GOVERNMENT,  
WHICH WILL SEEK TO HARMONIZE THEM WITH THOSE OF THE  
HOST GOVERNMENT AND WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE ABOVE  
POLICY CONSIDERATIONS.

4. IDEALLY, THE BEST OUTCOME OF AN INCIDENT WOULD BE:  
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(A) FREEDOM AND SAFETY OF THE HOSTAGES; (B) NO YIELDING  
TO ANY OF THE TERRORISTS' DEMANDS; AND, (C) ARREST AND  
PUNISHMENT OF THE TERRORISTS. IF THIS CANNOT BE ACHIEVED

WITHOUT UNDUE RISK TO THE HOSTAGES' LIVES, THE US  
GOVERNMENT CAN ACQUIESCE, AS A LAST RESORT, TO WHAT HAS  
BECOME TO BE KNOWN AS "THE BANGKOK SOLUTION," WHEREBY

THE TERRORISTS ARE GIVEN THEIR FREEDOM AND PUBLICITY FOR THEIR CAUSE IN EXCHANGE FOR THE RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES. THE BANGKOK SOLUTION CAN BE CONVERTED INTO THE IDEAL SOLUTION IF THE COUNTRY TO WHICH THE TERRORISTS ESCAPE CAN BE PERSUADED EITHER TO PROSECUTE OR EXTRADITE THEM.

5. THE FULL RESOURCES OF THE US GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE USED TO PURSUE SUCH TERRORISTS AND TO SEE THAT THEY ARE BROUGHT TO APPROPRIATE JUSTICE. THE BROADEST MULTILATERAL COOPERATION SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE SOUGHT TOWARD THESE ENDS IN THE UN, ICAO, AND OTHER APPROPRIATE FORUMS. BILATERAL AGREEMENTS SUCH AS THE US-CUBA ACCORD OF FEBRUARY, 1973, AND TRADITIONAL EXTRADITION TREATIES ALSO SHOULD INCLUDE SIMILAR LEGAL DETERRENTS TO TERRORISM.

PRESS GUIDANCE

6. RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS ARE CRUCIAL IN ANY TERRORIST SITUATION BOTH AT THE WASHINGTON END AND AT THE SCENE OF THE INCIDENT. THERE SHOULD BE COMPLETE COORDINATION IN ORDER THAT THE USG SPEAKS WITH ONE VOICE. WE MUST, OF COURSE, GIVE PRIORITY TO THE SAFE RETURN OF THE HOSTAGES AND TO THE APPREHENSION OF THE TERRORISTS. AT THE SAME TIME, WE SHOULD COOPERATE WITH THE RESPONSIBLE CONFIDENTIAL

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BLE PRESS, PROVIDING INFORMATION AND BACKGROUND WHICH WILL NOT FRUSTRATE THESE PRIMARY OBJECTIVES.

7. THE FORM OF CONTACT WITH THE PRESS WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE SENIOR OFFICIAL CONCERNED -- THE TASK FORCE COMMANDER IN WASHINGTON AND THE PRINCIPAL OFFICER AT THE POST CONCERNED. BOTH INDIVIDUALS SHOULD INCLUDE PRESS ADVISERS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE TASK FORCES. IN THE FIELD, WHERE THE HOST GOVERNMENT HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE RESCUE MISSION, PROMPT AND CONTINUING LIAISON SHOULD BE EFFECTED BETWEEN THE POST AND THE APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENT AGENCY TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS COMPATIBILITY BETWEEN US AND HOST GOVERNMENT OUTPUT.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

-- PERIODIC BACKGROUNDER BY THE PRINCIPAL OFFICER TO SELECTED PRESS HAVE BEEN FOUND USEFUL IN SUCH

INSTANCES AS THE SANTO DOMINGO RESCUE OF PAO HUTCHISON AS A SUPPLEMENT TO REGULAR HOST GOVERNMENT AND POST BRIEFINGS.

-- BRIEFINGS MIGHT INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING PHILOSOPHY,  
AS APPROPRIATE: TERRORISTS ARE NOT HEROES BUT RATHER  
CRIMINALS. THEIR THREAT TO VIOLATE THE RIGHT OF LIFE  
IS INTOLERABLE IN MODERN, PEACE-LOVING SOCIETY.  
POLITICAL PASSION, NO MATTER HOW DEEPLY HELD, CANNOT  
BE JUSTIFICATION FOR VIOLENCE AGAINST INNOCENT PERSONS.  
UNTIL POLITICAL TERRORISTS ACCEPT SUCH LOGIC, THEY MUST  
BE MADE TO UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS UNPROFITABLE FOR THEM  
TO KILL INNOCENTS. GOVERNMENTS HAVE A CONTINUING OBLI-  
GATION TO PROTECT THEIR CITIZENS FROM TERRORIST VIOLENCE  
AND CAN AND SHOULD DO SO WITHOUT VIOLATING OTHER RIGHTS  
SUCH AS SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY.

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-- US POLICY SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND AS THE INCIDENT  
EVOLVES SO THAT US ACTIONS AND REACTIONS ARE UNDERSTOOD  
IN THE PROPER PERSPECTIVE. VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Concepts:** POLICIES, CRIMES, TEXT, TERRORISTS  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014